



(I)

wherein, R^1 is alkyl; and each R^2 is independently hydrogen or alkyl; wherein each alkyl of R^1 and R^2 is optionally substituted by hydroxy, alkoxy, acyloxy, alkoxy carbonyloxy, amino, aryl, oxo or fluoro groups and is optionally interrupted by oxygen atoms; or a salt thereof; and ii) exposing said sites or surfaces to light.

2

22.(NEW) The method of claim 21 wherein aryl is phenyl or a monocyclic 5-7 membered heteroaromatic.

3

23.(NEW) The method of claim 21 wherein R^1 represents an unsubstituted alkyl group and each R^2 is hydrogen.

4

24.(NEW) The method of claim 21 wherein R^1 represents an unsubstituted alkyl group or each R^2 is hydrogen.

5

25.(NEW) The method of claim 21 wherein alkyl contains up to 10 carbon atoms.

6

26.(NEW) The method of claim 21 wherein the compound is ALA-methyl ester, ALA-ethyl ester, ALA-propyl ester, ALA-hexyl ester, ALA-heptyl ester, or ALA-octyl ester; or a salt thereof.

7

27.(NEW) The method of claim 21 wherein the light is in the wavelength region 500-700 nm.

8

28.(NEW) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound of formula I



(I)

wherein, R^1 is alkyl; and each R^2 is independently hydrogen or alkyl; wherein each alkyl of R^1 and R^2 is optionally substituted by hydroxy, alkoxy, acyloxy, alkoxy carbonyloxy, amino, aryl, oxo or fluoro groups and is optionally interrupted by oxygen atoms; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof; together with at least one pharmaceutical carrier or excipient.

9 4
28.(NEW) The composition of claim 28 wherein the compound is ALA-methyl ester, ALA-ethyl ester, ALA-propyl ester, ALA-hexyl ester, ALA-heptyl ester, or ALA-octyl ester; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

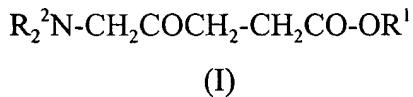
B1
W1
10 8
30.(NEW) The composition of claim 28 further comprising at least one surface-penetration assisting agent, and optionally one or more chelating agents.

11 10
31.(NEW) The composition of claim 30 wherein the surface-penetration assisting agent is dimethyl sulfoxide.

12 10
32.(NEW) The composition of claim 30 wherein the compound is ALA-methyl ester, ALA-ethyl ester, ALA-propyl ester, ALA-hexyl ester, ALA-heptyl ester, or ALA-octyl ester; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

13 10
33.(NEW) A method for in vitro diagnosis of abnormalities or disorders by assaying a sample of body fluid or tissue of a patient, said method comprising:

- i) admixing said body fluid or tissue with a compound of formula I



wherein, R^1 is alkyl; and each R^2 is independently hydrogen or alkyl;

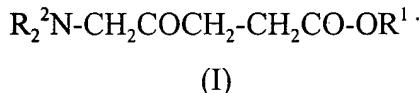
wherein each alkyl of R¹ and R² is optionally substituted by hydroxy, alkoxy, acyloxy, alkoxycarbonyloxy, amino, aryl, oxo or fluoro groups and is optionally interrupted by oxygen atoms; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof;

- ii) exposing said mixture to light;
- iii) ascertaining the level of fluorescence; and
- iv) comparing the level of fluorescence to control levels.

14 *3*
34.(NEW) The method of claim 33 wherein the compound is ALA-methyl ester, ALA-ethyl ester, ALA-propyl ester, ALA-hexyl ester, ALA-heptyl ester, or ALA-octyl ester; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

B1 *Wmcl* *15*
35.(NEW) A kit for use in diagnosis or photochemotherapy of disorders or abnormalities of external or internal surfaces of the body comprising:

- i) a first container containing a compound of formula I



wherein, R¹ is alkyl; and each R² is independently hydrogen or alkyl; wherein each alkyl of R¹ and R² is optionally substituted by hydroxy, alkoxy, acyloxy, alkoxycarbonyloxy, amino, aryl, oxo or fluoro groups and is optionally interrupted by oxygen atoms; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof;

- ii) a second container containing at least one surface penetration assisting agent; and optionally
- iii) one or more chelating agents contained either within said first container or in a third container.

19 *5*
36.(NEW) The kit of claim 35 wherein the compound is ALA-methyl ester, ALA-ethyl ester, ALA-propyl ester, ALA-hexyl ester, ALA-heptyl ester, or ALA-octyl ester; or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.